



Elgin Math & Science Academy

**Safe Return to In-Person
Policies
Procedures**

Frequently Asked Questions

Subject to change based on updates to CDC and IDPH guidance - Updated July 2022

Introduction

In addition to our regular Student Handbook, this handbook will provide guidance and policies related to the reopening of EMSA for full in-person instruction.

This plan is created with the most recent guidance released from ISBE and IDPH. Health and safety protocols are subject to change as guidance is updated. Updates will be made to this document and to EMSA's plan as guidance changes.

Changes to Instructional Settings

In collaboration with the local health department, ISBE guidance, executive orders from the governor, and the school board, EMSA may choose to select blended or remote learning in lieu of the traditional all-in-person instructional setting should health and safety concerns arise. At any point in time based on Illinois's status within the reopening plan, we may shift our instructional settings based on executive orders, guidance, and local situations.

Return to In-Person Resolution ISBE

In May of 2021, ISBE passed a resolution stating the following: Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, provided that, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66, remote instruction be made available for students who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine and are under a quarantine order by a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.

July 2021 ISBE Adopts CDC Guidance

On July 9th, 2021, ISBE announced that IDPH and ISBE have adopted CDC guidance for schools in Illinois. The following policies and procedures have been created with the updated guidance and recommendations.

Policies and Procedures for Returning to In-Person Instruction

EMSA is pleased to return to full in-person learning per the ISBE resolution. Below please find policies and procedures for specifics on how health and safety guidance will impact various school functions. As stated above, guidance for health and safety protocols is subject to change and will be updated in accordance with IDPH and ISBE guidance.

Staff and student Training on Health and Safety Procedures

All staff and students will be trained on new health and safety procedures before school begins, and on the first days of in-person attendance.

Face Coverings

While face coverings are no longer required, anyone is allowed to continue to wear a face mask and/or shield to their level of comfortability.

Face masks are currently required for those who have tested positive for covid and return after 5 days with improved symptoms. Face masks must be worn for an additional 5 days after their return.

Social Distancing

ISBE guidance recommends that schools have students 3 feet apart as much as possible.

Covid Testing at School

EMSA will still provide testing on site free of charge to any staff member or student. Registration for this process will be via email.

Positive Covid Results

If an individual tests positive through a rapid test or through any other testing done through outside medical care, EMSA will respond in the following manner:

- Students will be immediately isolated if at school and parents will be called for immediate pick-up.
- If the student is at home, they will be asked to stay home.
- Anyone testing positive will remain at home for 5 days and can return on day 6 so long as there are improved symptoms.
- Identify close contacts and communicate the option to quarantine for any non-vaccinated individuals.
- Send communication home to the class where there has been a positive covid case confirmed.

Nursing Services

- If a student is exhibiting Covid symptoms, a staff member will walk the child to the nurse's office for evaluation. All of the student's personal items should be sent with the child at this time as well. The student should never be left alone during isolation. The parent will be called for pick-up.
- If a staff member is exhibiting Covid symptoms, they should be sent home immediately or isolated while they wait for transportation. If isolation is needed, the nurse's office will be utilized for this.
- In the absence of the nurse, an administrator will perform the nursing duties as described above until the nurse is able to return.

Contact Tracing

Families and staff are encouraged to report to the school nurse or administrator any symptoms, diagnosis or exposure to Covid. Families and staff are to contact the school nurse or administrator prior to returning to school.

Close Contact

Close contact is for any non-vaccinated individual who was within 3 feet of an individual who has been confirmed covid positive for more than 15 minutes within a 24 hour time period.

Students and Staff in Quarantine

Should a student or staff member be diagnosed with COVID-19 they will be moved into self-quarantine. Quarantine periods are 5 days for those who have tested positive.

Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizing

Students and staff are expected to wash their hands or sanitize for the following activities:

- After using the restroom
- Before and after lunch
- Before and after recess
- Before and after transitioning to a special (music, art and PE)
- Upon entering the classroom
- Leaving the classroom for dismissal

This list is not exhaustive. Hand washing and hand sanitizing will be emphasized throughout the school day.

Cleaning

Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned on a daily basis. EMSA has created a cleaning schedule that includes increased daily sanitation of high traffic areas. In accordance with ISBE Guidance, daily cleaning for frequently touched surfaces (e.g. door handles/knobs, desktops/tabletops, countertops, pencil sharpeners, manipulatives, phones, cubbies, sinks and faucets, buses) will be required and scheduled. Students will wipe down computers daily and will not touch or share computers with others.

Water Fountains

School water fountains are now water bottle filling stations. Students will be able to fill a water bottle that they bring from home during their classroom's bathroom break.

Breakfast & Lunch

Students are returning to the cafeteria for lunch during the 22-23 school year. Should cases rise and mitigation strategies change, we will move students to eating in classrooms if appropriate.

Bus

Students must also remain in their seats the entire bus ride for safety and social distancing concerns. Siblings will be seated together but all other students will sit in individually assigned seats to allow for social distancing. There is a zero-tolerance policy regarding these guidelines for bus transport. Students who fail to comply will be suspended from utilizing school transportation.

Visitors

So long as covid case numbers are low, EMSA is back to a regular visitor protocol. It is optional to wear masks on EMSA property.

Special Education

- During remote instruction, services and accommodations per the IEP/504 plan will continue to be provided, as appropriate.
- Special Services staff will adhere to safety procedures when working with and/or assessing students in small group or 1:1 setting.
- Any accommodations or needs for testing will be addressed in the domain meeting and agreed upon as part of the process.

Field Work/Assemblies

Students will be able to participate in field work on campus and in community locations. This will be monitored and adjusted as necessary according to community transmission rates.

Remote Learning Considerations

According to the return to in-person resolution by ISBE, Remote Learning will be considered for a student should they not be eligible to receive the covid vaccine and are under a quarantine order from a doctor. Remote learning plans will be made for specific students who meet this criteria. Please note that there will be a 1-2 delay in the receipt of remote learning for a student in quarantine for planning purposes.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can students wear their own mask?

Absolutely. We would love for the students to have a fun mask that they choose to wear each day. Again, this is optional.

Will the school be supplying masks for the students?

EMSA is no longer supplying masks at this time.

Can children wear face shields instead of masks?

Yes. Both options are optional.

We were wondering if EMSA is considering any modifications to their plan?

We continually monitor data and guidelines and will continue to do so throughout the year and adapt accordingly. EMSA is not modifying the plan at this time, but will inform parents if and when something changes.